



# Special Report

Assemblymember Pedro Nava

35th District • October 2007

Welcome to the first edition of our “Special Report.” This is our way of focusing attention on people and places that offer solutions to unique challenges. Recently, guidance, mentoring and creating positive opportunities for youth has been the subject of much debate. We profile two organizations that have been working with young people to help them develop in a way that makes us all proud. Hope you enjoy meeting them. **Pedro Nava**

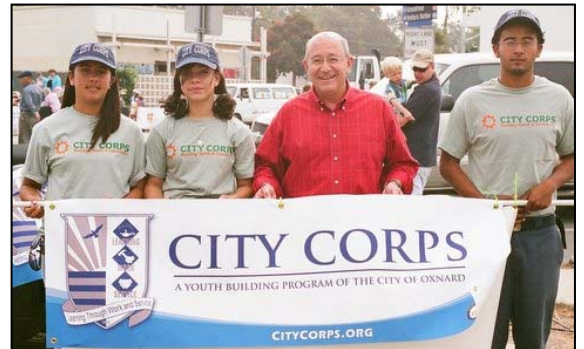
## Enhancing the Central Coast and the Lives of Our Youth

### Oxnard City Corps, now in its 12<sup>th</sup> year plans to expand to Ventura and Santa Barbara

**Oxnard-** As you walk into City Corps’ offices in downtown Oxnard you hear the chatter of youth helping other youth with homework, convening a meeting to prepare for a big project the next day, or debriefing on a just completed community project. In its 12<sup>th</sup> year, this buzz heard and felt in City Corps’ headquarters is what makes this program so successful. Unlike many other youth development programs, youth serve other youth as mentors, tutors, supervisors, and leaders. The grown-ups are here to advise, help nurture personal initiative, foster leadership development, and teach civic responsibility and active citizenship to its members. Director Efren Gorre believes in recognizing and affirming the individual worth and contributions of today’s youth in the community.



Last year, City Corps worked on 3,000 community projects in and around the Central Coast. Averaging approximately 250 projects a month, work includes restoring the wetlands at Ormond Beach, storm clean-ups, set-up and clean-up for major community events like Oxnard’s Salsa Festival and Assemblymember Nava’s Veteran’s Health and Resource Fair, handle all audio/video for Oxnard’s City Council meetings, and assist various city departments and non-profits in the community. These projects help develop leadership and exposes youth to community initiatives important to local residents, thus fostering a sense of civic responsibility. The results have been astounding as City Corps youth develop into confident and responsible leaders. Many have gone on to 4-year colleges and credit their involvement in City Corps for the direction and confidence boost.



**Top:** City Corps youth prepare before an Ormond Beach restoration project in Oxnard.

**Bottom:** Assemblymember Nava honors the work of City Corps youth during the Ventura County Fair Parade in 2007.

With its success already proven, Efren Gorre and other leaders in the community, including Assemblymember Nava, are working to bring this successful youth development model to other areas of the Central Coast, coordinating with the California Conservation Corps and local organizations.

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"City Corps has had great success in bringing the best out of our youth so they can contribute to our community in many positive ways," said Assemblymember Nava. "I am excited to work with Efren Gorre and City Corps to help make community leaders of the youth on the Central Coast."

For more information on Oxnard City Corps, contact them directly at (805)385-8081 or on the web at [Oxnard City Corps](http://Oxnard City Corps). Additionally, you may contact Assemblymember Nava's Ventura County District Office at (805) 483-9808.

## **Summer "Splash to Trash" Program for Local Youth Sponsored by Santa Barbara City Housing Authority**

**Santa Barbara-** For the past seven years, the Housing Authority of the City of Santa Barbara (HACSB) has sponsored a six week summer environmental education program for public housing youth.

"Splash to Trash" is a water awareness program that introduces students to water as a resource by exploring its source, cycle, habitats, and connection to human impacts such as pollution. The program includes curriculum, in-class presentations, field trips, and additional resources to aid student learning in the important topic of water conservation.

"Youth learn to appreciate our unique local water habitats. They grow to respect and protect the resources and how to make environmentally friendly choices. This is a wonderful program," said Assemblymember Nava.

Field trips to Lake Cachuma, El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant, and the Carpinteria Salt Marsh are part of the program. These trips help participants learn first hand about the watersheds that make up the surrounding areas of the community in which they live. The bulk of the Splash to Trash program takes place at Arroyo Gardens, a property behind a HACSB location in Santa Barbara that was converted into working garden space 15 years ago. The garden facility grows produce for local seniors, cultivates plants to enhance HACSB properties, and is home to rescued La Conchita banana trees.

For more information on the Splash to Trash Program, Arroyo Gardens, and other HACSB programs, visit their website at [www.hacsb.org](http://www.hacsb.org).



Santa Barbara Housing Authority interns working on a creek restoration project.

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